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Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

List of issues and questions in relation to the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of France

Addendum

Replies by France

Note: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.
* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework (Question No. 1)

1.1 Information on the current status of implementation of Act No. 2014-873 on substantive equality between women and men, and indicate whether all the planned measures are being implemented and the obstacles overcome

1. The implementing orders for Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 on substantive equality between women and men have been issued, in particular those relating to a broader jobs mix and balanced representation on boards of directors. The measures encouraging better sharing of parental responsibilities and a Government guarantee against unpaid alimony have entered into force.

1.2 Update the information given on the cross-cutting action plan entitled "Third generation of women's rights: towards a society of actual equality", aimed at promoting equality, parity, the protection of women against all forms of violence and the elimination of gender stereotypes (§ 2.3.1-2.3.3) and indicate the human, technical and financial resources allocated for its implementation in the State budget according to the explanation given on gender budgeting (§ 2.3.6)

2. Ministerial road maps are updated in connection with the annual conferences on equality conducted by the Ministry for Women's Rights along the lines of the budget conferences. A new Interministerial Committee on Women's Rights and Equality between Women and Men (CIDFE) had a restricted format meeting in January 2014 on the subject of professional equality and job mix. It will meet again in 2016.

3. Attached to the annual appropriation act is a cross-cutting policy paper (DPT) drafted by the Ministry entitled "Gender Equality Policy". It lists the actions undertaken and the financial resources allocated by the State to implement that policy. In 2015, €223 million were allocated to it.[1]

1.3 Indicate the results of any assessments conducted, especially of the annual evaluations of the strategic plans for gender equality and the new action priorities adopted with respect to women's rights

4. Interministerial programs for women's rights and gender equality (PIDFE) — which replace the strategic regional plans that ended in 2012 — have been drawn up in the regions and departments (11 PDFE were concluded in 2015-2016). This document highlights public and private partners' commitments to equality and mobilizes local partners.[2]

1.4 Indicate whether lawyers, judges and all other actors of the justice system are systematically trained on the Convention and its Optional Protocol. Indicate whether the Convention has been invoked in courts and, if it has, the number, nature and outcome of the cases

5. The Convention has been invoked in administrative jurisdictions. The Council of State has ruled on the direct applicability of certain articles (2, 16, 3 and 15).

[1] http://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2016/pap/pdf/DPT/DPT2016_egalite_femmes_hommes.pdf.

[2] Circular DGCS/B1/2011/258 of 12 September 2011. http://circulaire.legifrance.gouv.fr/pdf/2011/09/cir_33798.pdf.

6. Training courses for judges on discrimination and workplace harassment mention the Convention.

7. The subject of equality and efforts to combat discrimination is addressed within the framework of the overall training given to judicial assessors and judges. European seminars on gender equality legislation are held every year (six are scheduled in 2016).

8. A module on efforts to combat stereotypes has been added to the training given to the "new heads of court" (March 2016), before being deployed more extensively.

9. An initial and continuing training module on professional equality, tailored to the liberal practice of the profession of lawyer in Paris, is going to be instituted at the initiative of the competent bar.

Women's access to justice (Question No. 2)

2.1 Provide information on awareness-raising campaigns and other measures to encourage women to defend their rights and, in particular, bring complaints alleging sex or gender-based discrimination

10. Following the Act of 6 August 2012 on sexual harassment, new offences were established under the Act of 4 August 2014. Henceforth, it is up to the employer to take "all necessary steps to prevent, put an end to, and punish acts of harassment".[3]

11. Act No. 2015-994 of 17 August 2015 on social dialogue and employment defines the notion of sexist behaviour (*agissement sexiste*), now written into Article L. 1142-2-1 of the Labour Code.

12. To guarantee effective observance of these measures, an important communication mechanism has been set up that involves the establishment of a dedicated website. In the army and in higher education, action plans and new tools have been introduced: a listen-and-support team (THEMIS) in Defence and a *vade mecum* on installing specific harassment prevention and treatment mechanisms in higher education.

13. A draft act on group action and the judicial system, inspired by the views of the Defender of Rights expressed on 31 October 2013, is currently being debated in Parliament.

2.2 Furnish information on the provision of human, technical and financial resources to enable the Defender of Rights to fully exercise his mandate

14. The budgetary autonomy of the Defender of Rights is guaranteed on terms established in the appropriations act. He is the authorizing officer for the appropriations assigned to him and submits his accounts for inspection by the Audit Office.

15. The Defender has an annual budget of €27.5 million (2015) at his disposal. His office employs 234 officials, who are joined by 400 voluntary delegates nationwide.

[3] Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 on real equality between women and men.

2.3 Provide information on the impact of individual recommendations and provision of mediation made to date by the Defender and on the studies conducted and the proposals for legislative reforms suggested, in the field of discrimination against women

16. In 2014, the Defender of Rights made eight recommendations for reforms, which were taken into account in the Act of 4 August 2014.[4] Three concerned discrimination against women: revision of professional classifications; protection for women and men working under a liberal profession service agreement to take maternity and paternity leave; giving the same family life-related social rights to couples regardless of their legal status. A working group was set up in the Higher Council on Occupational Equality to review branch classifications. The Act of 4 August 2014 extends access to maternity and paternity leave to persons working under service agreements (*collaborateurs*) and their spouses.

2.4 Indicate how women suffering from multiple or intersecting discrimination can bring their claims before administrative or judicial authorities and obtain decisions addressing the grounds on which they are claiming their rights

17. The victim's complaint and, where applicable, the conviction, may cumulatively encompass several of the motives for discrimination listed in Article 225-1 of the Criminal Code: any distinction applied between natural persons by reason of their origin, sex, pregnancy, physical appearance (...) or their membership or non-membership, true or supposed, of a given ethnic group, nation, race or religion.

18. Added to the above list is discrimination arising when a distinction is applied between persons because they have undergone or have refused to undergo sexual harassment, or have witnessed such harassment.

National machinery for the advancement of women (Question No. 3)

3.1 Indicate whether the budget allocated to the national machinery for gender equality (currently a State secretariat in the Ministry for Social Affairs, Health and Women's Rights) will remain at around €25 million (§ 2.3.3) and the amounts to be invested by other ministries in gender equality policies and in nationwide efforts to tackle violence against women

19. A fully-fledged ministry was established on 3 March 2016.

20. The appropriations for Programme 137 "Equality between Woman and Men" amount to €26.96 million (2016). The total outlays of the various ministries contributing to the achievement of that objective are detailed in the annual cross-cutting policy paper (DPT) "Equality"[5] (€223 million, 2015, cf. point 1.2).

[4] Ibid.

[5] http://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2016/pap/pdf/DPT/DPT2016_egalite_femmes_hommes.pdf.

3.2 Provide information on the role played by the designated senior officials on the equal rights agenda in each ministry (§ 2.3.5) and indicate whether they have the time and authority necessary to carry out their mission

21. The job of activating the network of senior officials on the equal rights agenda falls to the Directorate-General for Social Cohesion (DGCS), in which the Director is the Interministerial Delegate on Women's Rights and Equality between Women and Men. Thanks to regular meetings, it is possible to keep track of commitments undertaken in the ministerial road maps, which are updated at the "Equality Conferences", attended by the highest ranking official on gender equality.[6]

22. Senior officials are required to organize meetings in their respective ministries to raise awareness and ensure that gender equality concerns are taken into account in draft law impact studies. They also participate in the seminars and "network days" organized by the DGCS.

3.3 Provide information on measures taken at the central, regional and municipal levels to coordinate the policies and mechanisms to achieve the full and uniform implementation of the Convention throughout the territory of the State party, including overseas territories (§ 1.5.1 and 1.5.2.6)

23. Overall policy coordination is achieved by promoting a culture of equality, particularly through the Act of 4 August 2014. It is implemented through sectoral plans and the signing of framework agreements, such as the Interministerial Convention for the Equality of Girls and Boys and Women and Men in the Education System of 7 February 2013 or the 2013-2015 Three-Year Convention on Goals for Priority Wards between the Ministry for Women's Rights and the Ministry responsible for the City of 21 May 2013.

24. Locally, coordination is achieved by the network of regional directorates for women's rights in both Metropolitan France and the overseas departments, using the above-mentioned PIDFE tool. In New Caledonia and French Polynesia responsibility for those policies lies with local authorities.

3.4 Provide information on the resources of the High Council for Gender Equality (HCEfh) (§ 2.3.3 and 2.3.5) and of the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights and indicate whether their resources are sufficient for their mandates in the field of gender equality, how duplication of functions between them is avoided and how their advice, opinions and/or recommendations are implemented

25. At the start of the High Council's second term, on 8 March 2016, the President of the Republic called for its "enshrinement by being written into law", so as to perpetuate it as an institution. In March 2016, the HCEfh presented its 2013-2015 Activities Report.[7]

26. Resources allocated to the High Council in 2016 total €45,100 (€15,000 in 2014). It employed five staff full time and one half time. It has 72 volunteers.

[6] 15 equality conferences were held from October to November 2015.

[7] http://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/stereotypes-et-roles-sociaux/zoom-sur/article/rapport-d-activite-du-hce-2013.

27. The appropriation for the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights (CNCDH) for 2016 is €1,119,881, an increase of 26 per cent over the 2014-2016 allocation.

28. Coordination between the High Council and the CNCDH is governed by their rules of procedure.[8]

Stereotypes and harmful practices (Question No. 4)

4.1 Update information on the measures presented in the report (§ 2.4.2.1-2.4.2.5) regarding training, education, awareness-raising and materials to eliminate discriminatory stereotypes in the media, culture, sport, public administration and education, among others

29. Boosting co-education is one of the three core priorities of the Interministerial Convention of 7 February 2013.[9] Component 2 of the "territories of excellence" experiments, which were extended to all regions in 2016, is part of that effort.

30. The agreements entered into with public media organizations include actions to enhance the way women are depicted on the air[10] or to once again build equality into the values the media are supposed to defend.[11]

31. The Act of 4 August 2014[12] contains several provisions aimed at combating sexism, such as replacing stereotyped references appearing in French law with wording that does not discriminate against women or the establishment of a procedure for flagging television programmes that have features that are sexist or degrading for women's image.

4.2 Indicate whether these measures, including the "ABCD of equality" pilot programmes for pupils and the "equality" modules in initial and ongoing training for teachers (§ 2.4.1), have been evaluated and extended to other schools

32. As a result of the Inspectorate General of National Education (IGEN)[13] report evaluating the "ABCD of Equality" programme, an action plan was set in motion in 2014 based on the production and availability of documentary resources on a dedicated website.[14] An online training platform for teachers was set up in 2015 to supplement academic and training seminars. Equality between girls and boys has been written into in-school education projects.[15]

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[8] Decree No. 2013-8 of 3 January 2013 on the establishment of the High Council for Gender Equality and Decree No. 2007-1137 of 26 July 2007 on the composition and workings of the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights.

[9] Interministerial Convention for the Equality of Girls and Boys and Women and Men in the Education System of 7 February 2013.

[10] Rider to France télévision's Objective and Means Contract, signed in 2013.

[11] TV5 Monde's 2014-2016 Strategic Plan.

[12] The above-mentioned Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 on real equality between women and men.

[13] http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid80894/evaluation-du-dispositif-experimental-abcd-de-l-egalite.html.

[14] http://www.reseau-canope.fr/outils-egalite-filles-garcons.html.

[15] Circular No. 2015-003 of 22 January 2015 http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid25535/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=85395.

33. Equality, the fight against discrimination, analysis of stereotypes are all now written into curricula, be it in the new ethics and civic values teaching programme introduced for all educational levels at the beginning of the 2015 school year, or the levels 2, 3, and 4 (compulsory school age) programmes that will come into effect at the start of the 2016 school year. The National Ministry of Education has approached the national schoolbook publishers union with a view to ensuring that authors have the main materials they need to write schoolbooks addressing the tools available for advancing equality between women and men.

4.3 Provide information on the evaluation of initiatives in the media, culture, sports and public administration, the challenges encountered and the results achieved with regard to changing social attitudes, including those relating to gender-based violence

34. On 8 March 2016, the Higher Council for the Audiovisual Sector (*Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel — CSA*) published initial figures showing a low proportion of women on the air (only 10 out of 40 broadcasting stations reported an equal or higher percentage of women. The rules on sexist advertising are currently being revised.

35. Sports federations are drawing up feminization plans (there were 81 such plans in 2015). Federal observatories of behaviour contrary to sporting values have been established.

4.4 Provide information on measures taken to encourage girls to study non-traditional subjects and to encourage companies to recruit women for non-stereotypical posts

36. The Government has set a target of achieving the desired gender mix in one third of professions between now and 2025. In addition to the above-mentioned interministerial agreement in the education system, a framework agreement was signed with the Pole Emploi employment centre on 27 April 2015. Incentive mechanisms have been put in place in some sectors, such as the call for projects "to promote and facilitate occupational gender equality and diversity", financed by the European Social Fund (€30 million).

37. At 31 December 2015, 57 establishments employing a total of 728,405 people, had received the occupational equality seal of approval, modelled on the diversity seal of approval (*label diversité*) created in 2008.

4.5 Measures taken to address the persistent stereotypical views that affect the position in the labour market, education and public and political life of migrant women, indigenous women in the overseas territories, Roma women and women of immigrant origin

38. Efforts to combat stereotypes are in line with the Interministerial Agreement on Equality between Girls and Boys and Women and Men in the Education System, 2013-2018.

39. The Interministerial Committee against Racism and Anti-Semitism (DILCRA) was established in February 2012. It is charged with proposing, coordinating and spearheading Government policy against racism and anti-Semitism. It coordinated the drafting of the 2015-2017 action plan against racism and anti-Semitism.

40. As regards access to rights for migrant Roma populations, Bulgarian and Romanian citizens now fully benefit from the social rights applicable to European and European Economic Area (EEA) citizens.

41. In Guadeloupe and Réunion Island, where strategic regional plans for equality are in place, awareness-raising seminars are organized in Government departments and in communities. Martinique has a prevention policy geared to adults. In French Polynesia, a package course for secondary schools and youth workers was presented on International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Stereotypes and harmful practices (Question No. 5)

5. Provide updated information on measures taken to tackle female genital mutilation, such as the gathering of primary data thereon, quantitative and qualitative studies conducted for the purpose of better assessing the risks among different groups of migrants, training for law enforcement officers, members of the judiciary, border guards, social workers and health providers, and the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators

42. The fourth Interministerial Plan for Preventing and Combating Violence against Women (2014-2016) establishes several mechanisms: a national Hot Line telephone number (3319 "Violence against Women Info") available 24/7, free of charge for women victims of violence; actions to inform both the general public and professionals, including nationwide dissemination of leaflets (160,000, one third of them in English) on female genital mutilation. Partnership with specialized associations has been reinforced, including with the national GAMS federation (Group for the Abolition of Genital Mutilation and Other Traditional Practices Harmful to Women's and Children's Health).

43. The Interministerial Task Force to Protect Women against Violence and to Combat Human Trafficking (MIPROF) and the National Observatory to Combat Violence against Women publish annual analyses and figures on this phenomenon.[16]

Violence against women (Question No. 6)

6.1 Indicate whether evaluations have been conducted with regard to the measures taken to date, in particular the implementation of Act No. 2010-769 of 9 July 2010 on violence against women, spousal violence and its impact on children, the four interministerial plans for preventing and combating violence against women, and the joint framework protocol established by the Ministers of Justice, the Interior and Women's Rights, and indicate the results of such evaluations and the adoption of policies based on them (§ 2.5.1)

44. The policy on preventing and eliminating violence against women is evaluated in specific parliamentary inquiries;[17] by teams from the Inspectorates;[18] and by independent bodies.[19]

[16] http://stop-violences-femmes.gouv.fr/no9-Mutilations-sexuelles.html.

[17] Cf. The National Assembly report on implementation of Act No. 2010-769 of 9 July 2010.

[18] Cf. Report by the General Inspectorate of Judicial Services (IGSJ) and the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs (IGAS), delivered to the ministers in June 2013.

[19] Cf. The mid-term evaluation of the Fourth Plan by the High Council for Gender Equality, submitted on 5 November 2015.

45. The Act of 4 August 2014,[20] drawing on recommendations made by the judicial and social affairs (IGSJ-IGAS) inspectorates in June 2013, extended the validity of protection orders from four to six months in order to afford more lasting protection to victims of spousal violence.

46. The High Council for Gender Equality (HCEfh) is the body responsible for overall evaluation of the Fourth Plan.

6.2 Indicate whether, under the current system, women and girls, including asylum-seeking, refugee, migrant and Roma women, as well as women of immigrant origin and those with disabilities, and/or women living in sensitive urban areas enjoy sufficient protection and access to justice and other services, such as shelters, social services and legal and psychological counselling, throughout the territory of the State party, including overseas territories

47. The principle that citizens are equal before the law, established in Article 1 of the Constitution, means that no distinction based on gender can be made among the beneficiaries of public "social cohesion" policies (to combat poverty, provide protection for children and persons with disabilities, and so on).

48. Act No. 2015-925 of 29 July 2015 amending asylum rules and Act No. 2016-274 of 7 March 2016 on the rights of foreign nationals in France improve reception procedures for newly arriving women by providing services better tailored to their needs: a refresher course in civic education, help with learning the language, and sensitization regarding employment issues.

49. Nearly half (45 per cent) of the people granted international protection by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) between 2010 and 2014 were women and girls.

50. Pursuant to the "procedures" Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013, OFPRA established special procedural guarantees for vulnerable persons.

51. Five categories of people were identified for the purpose of meeting specific needs in dealing with their cases (individuals persecuted because of their sexual orientation; minors on their own; victims of torture; women victims of violence; and victims of trafficking). The Office's approach and interviewing techniques are tailored to developments in the countries of origin. The time taken to examine applications may now be adapted in order to gather more details on an applicant's case and applicants may now be accompanied by a professional.

52. Efforts to combat discriminatory and vicious behaviour towards Roma and Travellers fall within the scope of ordinary law and the phenomenon is addressed by the judiciary within the broader framework of existing provisions against discrimination and racism. It is regarded as a criminal policy priority.[21]

53. As regards access to rights for migrant Roma populations, Romanian and Bulgarian nationals now benefit fully from the social rights enjoyed by European and EEA citizens following the end of the transitional job market access measures.

[20] The above-mentioned Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 on real equality between women and men.

[21] See the reply to question 16, below.

54. Between 15,000 and 20,000 people are living in illicit camps in France. Since 2012, the Government has embarked on a policy of reintegrating those people and getting rid of the camps, the idea being to give their inhabitants access to ordinary law, health, and schools. Thus, more than 1,000 people gained access to housing in 2013, over 900 children enrolled in schools and more than 1,900 were able to see a doctor. In 2014, those figures rose to 2,000 people finding accommodation, 1,255 children were enrolled in schools, and 2,600 saw a doctor.

55. Reception area capacity is growing. At end-2015, the ratio of "reception areas built/those envisaged in departmental plans" was 69.2 per cent (1,090 areas built, or 26,873 places), a 66 per cent increase over end-2008. One thousand family rental lots were made available to semi-sedentary people or people wanting to settle down. Eight hundred social housing units adapted for Travellers have been financed.

56. A bill on Travellers, voted on by the National Assembly at a first reading on 9 June 2015, is due to be examined by the Senate. It provides for greater power of substitution of the prefect when it comes to building reception areas and including Travellers' reception and housing needs in local housing programmes.

57. The National Advisory Commission on Travellers was reorganized in May 2015:[22] Travellers now have more say in its work.

58. With respect to sensitive urban areas, pursuant to Act No. 2014-173 of 21 February 2014 on town planning and social cohesion, the 2016 guidelines adopt an integrated approach and seek to promote the civil participation of women and their place in the public arena, especially by constructing innovative markets ("*marchés exploratoires*"), and to develop local strategies for boosting women's access to jobs and create neighbourhood activities.

59. In overseas territories, mechanisms have been developed to protect and look after women victims of violence and their children: reception, listening and counselling centres; day care; joint social worker and police facilities; the distance protection (helpline) device for women in danger known as "téléphone grave danger 115"; emergency shelters; and complaint filing protocols.

60. Several manuals listing victim support and assistance services have been distributed in Guadeloupe and Mayotte. In Martinique, the Government has taken steps to connect specialized police station units with civil society actors and stakeholders. An agreement has been signed by the State, the Family Allowance Fund (CAF) and the Social Security Fund to strengthen access to rights for women victims of violence. Under certain circumstances, in Mayotte police and justice system officials are allowed to intervene in schools.

6.3 Further elaborate on the role of the Interministerial Mission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence and for Combating Human Trafficking (MIPROF) (§ 2.5.2.4 and 2.5.3), in particular regarding the training of professionals providing care for women who are victims of violence. Provide information on human, technical and financial resources allocated for its role in combating violence against women

61. Under the aegis of MIPROF, training tools have been developed by multidisciplinary teams to improve registration of acts of violence, provide better

[22] Decree No. 2015-563 of 20 May 2015 on National Advisory Commission on Travellers.

reception and support facilities for victims, and facilitate partnership among the professionals looking after them. These teaching kits are used in both initial and continuing training for health professionals, social workers, child care personnel, security forces and the judiciary.

62. Models of the professional documents to be handed to women victims have been prepared. The National Council of Doctors and the National Council of Midwives have drawn up a model medical certificate. The National Council of Social Workers and training institutions recommend the model social worker's certificate established by MIPROF.

63. In 2016, the training courses will address female sexual mutilation and forced marriage. Training for firefighters and municipal police officers will include a module on dealing with women victims of violence.

Violence against women (Question No. 7)

7.1 Provide information on measures taken to overcome women's reluctance to file complaints of assault and/or sexual abuse in the home (§ 2.5.1)

64. Several complementary measures have been taken to overcome women's reluctance to file complaints: information campaigns; the obligation, under the Act of 4 August 2014, for professionals to be trained to register and provide ongoing support for these women.

65. The nationwide, 24/7, 3919 "Violence against Women Info" Hotline has been in place since 1 January 2014 to listen to and counsel women victims of violence.

66. The www.stop-violences-femmes.gouv.fr website was launched on 21 November 2013.

67. The national protocol on the processing of police registers and legal information reports on domestic violence is designed to ensure that no act of violence reported to the police or gendarmes is left without a social response.

68. The national police and gendarmerie have introduced new mechanisms that have had a positive impact on the complaint rate and disclosure. The Ministry of the Interior's website has a special interactive section providing access to the coordinates of departmental and local victim assistance services.

69. Inside police and gendarmerie stations, representatives of victim assistance associations provide social and psychological support. This mechanism is in line with agreements reached with the National Institute for Victim Support and Mediation (INAVEM), the National Information Centre on Women's and Family Rights (CNIDFF) and the National Federation of Women's Solidarity.

70. Social workers provide support in police and gendarmerie stations. The 2014-2017 National Crime Prevention Strategy aims to double the number of social workers in those stations (ISCG) to 350 by 2017.

7.2 Provide information on further measures taken to raise awareness of the complaint mechanisms available to victims of domestic violence, in particular those belonging to the most vulnerable groups of women (§ 2.5.3), and on the envisaged better implementation of protection orders (§ 2.5.2.4)

71. The training given to the police on domestic violence includes a special training kit on techniques for taking statements that make it easier for victims to file complaints.

72. 1,800 experienced counsellors on domestic violence matters ("*référents ainés-violences intrafamiliales*") are assigned to gendarmerie posts and 442 local correspondents are present in all 442 national police districts. The Government also finances the presence of social workers, psychologists and help desks staffed by victim assistance associations in police stations and units of the gendarmerie.

73. As regards protection orders, apart from the distribution of circulars with guidelines, judges and legal practitioners now receive better training. The Act of 4 August 2014[23] strengthens the protection mechanism by making it easier for the victim of domestic violence to remain in the home and extending the validity of the protection order from four to six months.

74. In 2015, there were 2,905 registered requests for protection orders (up from 1,662 in 2011).

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution (Question No. 8)

8.1 Information received by the Committee indicates that the interministerial plan for combating human trafficking adopted for the period 2014-2017 has not yet been implemented, owing to the lack of allocation of the necessary funds. Indicate whether funds will be allocated, whether the objectives of the previous interministerial plan have been achieved and whether the envisaged statistical instrument (§ 2.6.1) has been established

75. The National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (2014-2017) provides for:

- Identifying and assisting victims: cultural mediator positions will be created in 2016 to reinforce the work done by (victim assistance) associations. The directive of the Ministry of the Interior of 19 May 2015 on the terms governing the review of applications for residence permits calls upon the departments to appoint a single focal point exclusively in charge of communications with the central level, who will assist victims with the procedures for obtaining a residence permit.

76. Working groups constituted by the Interministerial Task Force to Protect Women against Violence and to Combat Human Trafficking (MIPROF) are developing new instruction materials for professionals.

- Promotion of the "Ac.Sé" mechanism, also known as the National Network for the Assistance and Protection of Human Trafficking Victims, which enables victims to separate from the place they were exploited and receive shelter and

[23] The above-mentioned Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 on real equality between women and men.

assistance from professionals.[24] Shelters and reintegration centres will be encouraged to take victims into account when planning the number of places available. The new anti-prostitution Act of 6 April 2016 requires victims of trafficking to be included among priority groups for social housing allocation. It provides for longer residence permits, stronger protection measures (administrative assignment of a new address, a cover name, entitlement to closed hearings), and a pathway to escape from prostitution, all of which generate more robust rights, plus the establishment of a special fund for these purposes.

77. The circular of 22 January 2015 calls upon public prosecutors to step up efforts to bring more trafficking charges; the proposed law broadens the sphere of competence of labour inspectors to verification of human trafficking offences. These actions are being combined with active European and international cooperation in this field.

78. A statistical instrument is being put in place. The National Consultative Commission for Human Rights (CNCDH) monitors and evaluates public policy aimed at combating human trafficking and draws up an annual report on it.

79. Public Policy against Trafficking in Persons is financed by the Ministry of Families, Children and Women's Rights, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior, which allocated €2.4 million in 2015 and double that amount in 2016. These ministries also contribute more broadly to the implementation of this policy: providing training, care, social shelters, and legal aid facilities.

8.2 Indicate whether the Interministerial Mission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence and Combating Human Trafficking and the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights will receive increased human, technical and financial resources to ensure the effective coordination, monitoring and assessment of Government action against trafficking in persons and the sexual exploitation of women

80. The overall and fixed operating budget of MIPROF amounts to €30,300. It employs five people full-time and one half-time.

81. The funds allocated to the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights are assessed annually, based on the status of the work it is doing.

8.3 Indicate whether the number of prosecutions and sanctions for trafficking have increased with the broadened interpretation of trafficking (§ 2.6.2) and provide an update on the number of victims (§ 2.6.1)

82. The criminalization of trafficking has been more precisely defined, in conformity with European legislation and separate offences of enslavement, reduction to servitude, and forced labour have been established.[25]

[24] Circular No. JUSD1501974C of 22 January 2015 on criminal policy relating to human trafficking and Instruction No. INTV1501995N of 19 May 2015 on terms governing the granting of residence permits to foreign nationals who are victims of human trafficking or procuring.

[25] Act No. 2013-711 of 5 August 2013 containing various provisions adapting judicial legislation [to bring domestic law into line with European Union law and France's international commitments].

83. The main purpose of the Circular of 22 January 2015 was to encourage greater recourse to the characterization of human trafficking offences, if need be cumulatively along with other characterizations. This criminal law response seeks to encompass all dimensions of the phenomenon.

84. As regards convictions (offences and individuals), 264 human trafficking offences resulted in convictions in 2014 (up 60 per cent over the figure for 2013). That number is more than tenfold the figure four years earlier (23 convictions in 2010). In all, 91 individuals were convicted (64 in 2013).

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution (Question No. 9)

9.1 Indicate whether the repeal of the requirement to cooperate with the police in order to obtain a temporary residence permit for women victims of trafficking is envisaged and whether the evaluation mentioned (in § 2.6.2.2) has been conducted

85. Victims are taken care of regardless of their nationality, willingness to cooperate, or administrative status in respect of a residence permit. Prefects may issue a residence permit on humanitarian grounds or for exceptional reasons under Article L313-14 of the Code of Entry and Residence of Aliens and the Right to Asylum (CESEDA). Prefects are encouraged to avail themselves of these provisions in cases in which "undocumented victims of trafficking or procurement are in distress and do not cooperate for fear of reprisals against them (...)".[26]

86. The new tougher law against prostitution provides for provisional authorization to issue a six-month residence permit to victims who are on a path towards escaping from prostitution, irrespective of their cooperation with judicial authorities.[27]

87. There are two ways in which French authorities grant international protection to victims of trafficking:

- Subsidiary protection that can be granted because a victim runs the risk of inhuman or degrading treatment if returned to her country of origin (Article L. 712-1 of the CESEDA). The beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are issued a temporary one-year, but renewable, residence permit, marked "private and family life" (Article 313-13 of the CESEDA);
- Refugee status, granted because the victim is seen as pertaining to a social group in the sense of article 1A (2) of the Geneva Convention of 1951 (United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees). Persons granted refugee status receive a residence card which is valid for 10 years.

[26] Directive No. INTV1501995N of 19 May 2015 on the terms governing the granting of residence permits to foreign nationals who are victims of human trafficking or procurement.

[27] New article L 316-1-1 of the CESEDA.

9.2 Provide information on measures envisaged to offset the possibly increased security and health risks for sex workers owing to the criminalization of clients of prostitution (§ 2.6.3)

88. France pursues an abolitionist policy for the eradication of prostitution and thus does not recognize the term "sex workers". It regards prostituted persons as victims.

89. The new tougher law against prostitution aims to provide better protection for prostitutes against the various forms of violence inherent in such exploitation. In its 2012 report on the health hazards associated with prostitution, the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs (IGAS) had insisted on the increased health risks and risk of violence associated with the establishment of the crime of passive soliciting in the 2003 law, which has since been repealed (article 13 of the new law).

90. Granting victim status to prostitutes guarantees them specific legal, social, and health-related rights: the victim is in a better position to escape from prostitution.

91. The treatment of prostitutes has been improved by the establishment of a path to escape from prostitution through social and professional integration, with the assistance of licensed associations and the provision of financial aid.

Women's participation in political and public life (Question No. 10)

10.1 The report presents the legislative measures and electoral reforms adopted to increase the participation of women in elective functions (§ 3.1.1). Provide statistics on the gender composition of all legislative and executive bodies at the national, regional, departmental and municipal levels

92. In European elections of 2014, the women's share of Euro-parliamentarians was 43.2 per cent.

93. In France's Executive Branch, there are 18 ministers and 20 secretaries of state. Parity is strictly observed.

94. In the National Assembly, 40.1 per cent of the candidates in the 2012 legislative elections were women. They amount to 26.9 per cent of elected members of Parliament.

95. In the 2014 elections for the Senate, 22.3 per cent of those elected were women, an increase of 0.2 per cent compared to the previous elections in 2011.

96. The Act of 4 August 2014 provides for doubling the penalties for political parties that fail to respect parity.

97. During the regional elections in 2015, the share of women councillors was 47.8 per cent. For women presidents of regions, the figure was 17.6 per cent. While the proportion of women councillors remained stable compared to the 2010 elections, their share of presidencies increased by nearly 10 per cent.

98. For departmental councillor elections, the Organic Law of 17 May 2013 requires each canton to present a man and a woman. Departmental executive positions must observe parity. That reform meant that parity was achieved during the latest departmental elections of 2015. However, women account for 9.9 per cent of the presidencies, nearly double their 5.5 per cent share in the 2011 elections.

99. Following the 2014 municipal elections, 40.3 per cent of municipal councillors and 16 per cent of mayors are women.

10.2 Also provide statistics for independent administrative authorities, key consultative State bodies, senior civil service administration, high-ranking positions in universities, the posts of ambassador and consul, positions in management and on company boards (§ 3.1 and 3.2) and the professional and social responsibilities mentioned in § 4.1.3 of the report

100. In 2014, for the three civil service levels taken as a whole (national or State [FPE], regional [FPT] and hospital) women made up 62 per cent of personnel. The proportion is similar for category A staff, a majority of whom are women (61 per cent, 61 per cent, and 73 per cent, respectively). However, the glass ceiling appears when it comes to senior executive and management positions. Women hold one third of these positions (30 per cent in the case of FPE and 28 per cent in the case of FPT). Women hold 43 per cent of hospital director positions.

101. Although women held almost half (43.5 per cent) of assistant professor positions in universities in 2013, they only made up 24 per cent of lecturers and 18.2 per cent of presidents of universities. Women are especially clearly underrepresented among those elected to university boards, where they account for only 27 per cent.

102. In January 2016, 35 of France's 180 ambassadors were women (19 per cent, up from 10 per cent in 2006). While that proportion appears to be stable, it conceals a positive trend towards appointing more female ambassadors to important countries than was the case in the recent past.

103. According to European Commission data for 2015, women accounted for 33 per cent of non-executive members of listed companies, 13 per cent of executive members, and 0 per cent of CEOs. Apart from CEOs, these figures have been improving, particularly thanks to the Act of 27 January 2011. In 2012, women had made up 27 per cent of non-executive members and 8 per cent of executive members. On 31 December 2015, the State signed "commitment to gender equality" agreements with 29 large enterprises, which have agreed to pursue quantitative targets to "pierce the glass ceiling".

Education (Question No. 11)

11.1 Provide information on the results obtained by the combination of measures based on the five laws mentioned in § 2.4.2.1 of the report, on the interministerial convention for the equality of girls and boys and women and men in the education system, to which six ministries are parties, for the period from 2013 to 2018 (§ 2.4.2.2), and on the gender equality charter between the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and the standing conference of presidents of universities and specialized higher education institutions and directors of schools of engineering

104. Since 2012, the Ministry of Education has been producing an annual report on the actions it takes to promote equality between girls and boys in school.[28]

[28] http://www.najat-vallaud-belkacem.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/2016_FdR-2016_MENESR.pdf.

105. The "2016 Road Map" requires equality to be built into curricula,[29] and, among other measures, introduces a series of educational, artistic, cultural, "future prospects" and "civic" pathways or programmes.

106. The ministerial policy is in line with the three pillars of the above-mentioned interministerial convention, regarding which a mid-term evaluation is currently being prepared. Article 46 of the Act of July 22, 2013[30] requires the appointment of gender equality auditors in universities. The tasks entrusted to them were strengthened by a circular issued on 29 January 2015. Gender equality policy steering committees have also been established or strengthened.

11.2 Indicate the degree to which the triple aims of the Committee on Equality, which is responsible for the coordination of policies on equality in higher education and research, have been achieved

107. The Committee on Equality (COMEGAL) is an instrument for steering, coordinating and mutually reinforcing policies on equality in higher education and research. Its role needs to be strengthened, through more regular consultations, in addition to the annual meeting, so that it can be in a position to put forward proposals.

108. The annual road map for gender equality of the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, published on 8 March 2016, gives a positive account of actions undertaken. In 2016, the Ministry will continue to pursue the key steps it has already embarked upon and engage in new projects aimed at crossing new thresholds on the path to gender equality.

Education (Question No. 12)

12.1 It is indicated in the report that women are still a minority in the most prestigious sectors and levels, which are major providers of jobs (§ 3.1.5). Provide information on measures taken to eliminate traditional stereotypes and structural barriers that may deter girls, in particular those with parents of immigrant origin (§ 2.2.1.2), and/or those living in sensitive urban areas, from enrolling in traditionally male-dominated fields of study in higher education and to step up efforts to provide girls with career counselling on non-traditional career paths, as well as alternatives outside formal education, including non-stereotypical vocational training

109. Established by Act No. 2013-595 of 8 July 2013 containing guidelines and plans for overhauling the schools of the Republic, the "Future Prospects pathway" is studied by all pupils from sixth year of basic education to their final year. It should familiarize them with the diversity of careers and training opportunities open to them and develop their own provisional guidelines. Special care is taken to combat social and gender stereotypes.

110. In 2014, 55.2 per cent of students in higher (tertiary) education were women. The most significant advances were observed in engineering faculties (up 5 percentage points in 14 years) and in health-related courses (+5.8 points). Women remain a minority in the most selective courses (41.9 per cent in preparatory classes

[29] See supra, the reply to Question No. 4.
[30] The above-mentioned Act No. 2013-660 of 22 July 2013 on higher education and research.

for prestigious universities [*les grandes écoles*]; 39.2 per cent in university technology institutes (IUT) and in science faculties (27.2 per cent of those studying engineering)).

111. Specifically in universities, 58.4 per cent of the students are women, but still a minority (37.1 per cent) in science programmes. In preparatory classes for university diplomas of technology (DUT), women are a majority (50.2 per cent of students) in the services sector, but a minority (23.5 per cent) in productive sector courses.

112. Under the interministerial convention, schools and companies enter into framework and broad cooperation agreements and by May 2015, 58 "Education-Economy" partnerships had been signed. Under those agreements, the company commits to participate in actions aimed at correcting all forms of discrimination, especially gender-based discrimination, in the social depiction of professions and to foster an entrepreneurial spirit. The idea is to develop such agreements at the academic level.

113. The National Office for Information on Education and the Professions (ONISEP) has launched a site devoted to this issue. Numerous actions have been undertaken by university counselling services and partnerships entered into with associations aimed at steering female secondary school students towards short apprenticeships in industrial sectors or encouraging them to enter higher education programmes in science and technology.

12.2 Provide data on the educational achievements of migrants and girls of immigrant origin at all levels

114. In 2014, there were 298,000 foreign students, up 1.3 per cent over the previous year. In higher education, their share has remained stable, at 12.1 per cent. In 2014, universities admitted 73 per cent of the foreign students, who made up 14.3 per cent of all students enrolled at university.[31]

115. Women make up a majority (54.7 per cent) of foreign university students. They account for 44.8 per cent of African students and 67.7 per cent of European students.

Employment (Question No. 13)

13.1 It is acknowledged in the report that, notwithstanding numerous measures to promote equality in the labour market, women still suffer from persistent discrimination (§ 4.1) and the report indicates that a new approach is being pursued. Provide updated information on the status of implementation, and any assessment made, of the joint action plan to ensure occupational equality adopted by a tripartite steering committee in September 2012

116. The Act of 4 August 2014[32] requires social partners in various sectors to remit to the National Collective Bargaining Commission and the High Council on

[31] The concept of "girls of immigrant origin" does not exist in France because so-called ethnic statistics are forbidden. Partial data on foreign nationals (as opposed to migrants) are nevertheless collected.

[32] The above-mentioned Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 on real equality between women and men.

Professional Equality a report on the revision of professional categories and classifications. When an average wage gap between women and men is ascertained, social partners must make it a priority to narrow that gap.

117. Obligations to negotiate occupational equality issues have been simplified and united in a single negotiation of working and employment conditions.

118. The Act of 4 August 2014[33] added four days of leave of absence when an employee gets married and four days of leave when an employee enters into a civil union ("civil solidarity pact"). It also establishes an incentive for spouses to share parental leave.[34] The law also introduced the benefit of leave of absence to attend mandatory prenatal examinations for a spouse or partner of a pregnant employee.

119. A platform for actions designed to achieve gender diversity in occupations was set up in 2014, with some 30 partners committed to improving 10 job-generating sectors by addressing all causes of discrimination.

120. The Act of 4 August 2014[35] includes among the categories of continuing vocational training activities actions to promote gender diversity in enterprises, actions to raise awareness of efforts to combat gender stereotypes and actions to achieve occupational equality of women and men.

121. The mechanisms for combating all forms of harassment have been supplemented by measures to protect employees who are victims of psychological or sexual harassment: apart from preventing such situations, employers must put a stop to and sanction acts of harassment.

122. The Act of 17 August 2015[36] requires balanced representation for staff elections, balance in the composition of electoral lists that reflects the gender composition of the electoral body, and alternation of women and men at the top of the list.

123. An experimental telework programme has been implemented under an agreement signed on 20 June 2014 by the Ministry of Women's Rights and the National Agency for Improving Work Conditions (ANACT).

13.2 Provide information on results achieved through implementation of the "free choice of activity" supplement, which aims to encourage fathers to take paternity leave

124. Fathers account for 3.9 per cent of the beneficiaries of the "free choice of activity" supplement (Clea). They are more likely to make partial use of it than women (71 per cent compared to 46 per cent). Twenty-seven per cent of those fathers, compared to 1 per cent of the beneficiary mothers, receive the benefit at the same time as their spouse.

125. Parental leave was amended in 2014. A section of the Clea (renamed "shared child rearing allowance" or PreParE) is reserved for the second parent. For a first child, it was extended from a maximum of six months for one parent to one year if both parents take leave. For the second child, the PreParE allowance can be

[33] The above-mentioned Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 on real equality between women and men.
[34] See Supra.
[35] Ibid.
[36] The above-mentioned Act No. 2015-994 of 17 August 2015 on social dialogue and employment.

disbursed until the child is three years old as before, but each parent can only take a maximum of 24 months.

126. As the amendment measure is not being applied to PreParE already under way, data on the impact of the sharing of the benefit are not yet available.

13.3 Indicate whether the goal has been attained of ensuring uniform coverage of care facilities for infants throughout the territory to overcome the difficulties experienced by the lowest-income families, and single parent households in particular (§ 4.1.1.1)

127. The supply of facilities is increasing: 55.1 places in facilities in 2013 for every 100 children under the age of three, compared to 48.7 places in 2010. All in all, there are 1,342,900 places in care facilities. The number of places with childminders increased from 723,400 in 2010 to 800,700 in 2013. Places in establishments for children under the age of three increased in the same period from 38,000 to 403,700. Supply varies from one department to another from 10 to 88 places per 100 children under three (in 2003). In 2010, the range had been between 9 and 80.

128. New measures have been adopted in favour of low-income and single parent households, as part of the updating of the multiyear plan for combating poverty and achieving social inclusion, adopted in 2013. Three-quarters of new places in facilities financed by family allowance funds will be created in priority areas. In those areas, the €2,000 supplementary allowance for each day care place, established in 2015, is being maintained in priority areas.

129. There are plans to support the creation of day care centres as part of an occupational integration programme in underprivileged districts. These facilities will reserve places for the children of unemployed parents, who may receive an allowance to help them look for a job. Thus, a national charter is being signed to facilitate implementation of a network of day care centres to receive at least 30 per cent of children whose parents would receive increased support in their efforts to return to the workforce.

Employment (Question No. 14)

14.1 Provide information on measures taken to strengthen the social entitlements of part-time workers and to reduce the share of women in this category (§ 4.1.1.2)

130. Act No. 2013-504 of 14 June 2013 on employment security introduces several measures as "rechargeable entitlements" to unemployment insurance negotiated by the social partners and the establishment of a minimum threshold of 24 hours' work per week. The law establishes an obligation to negotiate in those occupational branches that habitually resort to part-time work. A section on enhancing the quality of women's jobs was written into the framework agreements between the General Directorates of Social Cohesion, Employment and Vocational Training and Pôle employ (see above).

14.2 Indicate whether businesses comply with their legal obligations to develop measures aimed at closing the wage gap through collective bargaining, and specify how women working in small and medium-sized enterprises that have no union representation can benefit from such a practice (§ 4.1.2)

131. Pursuant to article L. 2242-9 of the Labour Code, enterprises with at least 50 employees must be covered by a plan of action designed to guarantee occupational and wage equality between women and men in the workplace. As of 15 December 2015, 39.2 per cent of enterprises subject to that requirement had such a plan (33 per cent of enterprises with between 50 and 299 employees, 67 per cent of enterprises with between 300 and 999 employees, and 84 per cent of enterprises with 1,000 or more employees.

132. In enterprises with fewer than 50 employees, which are not subject to these obligations, employees benefit from actions contemplated in branch agreements. The social partners must meet, at the branch level, every three years, to discuss "measures designed to secure occupational equality and catch-up measures to remedy any inequalities detected".[37] As regards remuneration, the implementation of these commitments is monitored in the context of the annual branch negotiations on wages and by the National Commission on Collective Bargaining (CNNC). In 2014, of all the branch agreements in effect, 979 addressed this issue.

14.3 Indicate whether the draft act guaranteeing the future and fairness of the pension system, which includes provisions to improve the pensions of women, has been adopted, and, if it has, whether an initial gender impact assessment has been conducted with a view to reducing the pension gap (§ 4.1.5)

133. Act No. 2014-40 of 20 January 2014 guaranteeing the future and fairness of the pension system contains measures aimed at reducing inequalities between women and men. Thus, all maternity leave quarters will be validated. More account will be taken of part-time and poorly paid work in the validation of quarters (150 hours of the statutory minimum wage (SMIC) versus 200 previously) and low pensions, 70 per cent of which go to women, have been increased.

134. The Pensions Advisory Council is now tasked with monitoring gaps and inequalities that may arise in respect pensions and with analysing factors penalizing women's pensions. The Pensions Monitoring Committee produces an annual report, which contains a comparative analysis of old-age pensions for women and men.[38]

[37] Article L. 22241-3 of the Labor Code.

[38] http://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/document/document/2015/07/2e_avis_du_comite_de_suivi_des_retraites_v14_vdef.pdf.

Health (Question No. 15)

15.1 Provide information on measures taken to scale up information and awareness-raising efforts to encourage the correct use of contraceptive methods, and on inequality among women with regard to access to such methods, and to develop the use of more diversified methods of contraception, better suited to various lifestyles, ages and plans of women and couples (§ 4.2.3.1)

135. The Act of 26 January 2016 on modernizing our health system[39] establishes a right to information regarding all forms of contraception and to choose one freely. "It is incumbent upon all health professionals to provide such information within their sphere of competence and observing all the professional rules applicable to them".

136. The restrictions on secondary school students' access to emergency contraception at the school infirmary have been lifted. The requirements of urgency and demonstrable distress have been eliminated.

137. The National Institute for Prevention and Health Education (INPES) has run three major awareness campaigns since 2013. Apart from the campaign on women's right to dispose of their body, launched on 28 September 2015, a new national anonymous and cost-free "sexuality, contraception and voluntary termination of pregnancies (VTOPs)" hotline number has been created (No. 0 800 08 11 11), operated by the French Family Planning Movement. The High Authority for Health (HAS) did a study in 2014 enabling health professionals to identify and propose methods best suited to the profile and situation of persons requesting those services.

15.2 Provide updated information on measures to reduce the rate of teenage and/or unwanted pregnancy, including through improvements in the accessibility, availability and affordability of sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning information and services, in both metropolitan and overseas territories

138. The Act of 26 January 2016 on modernizing our health system lifts restrictions on secondary school students' access to emergency contraception at the school infirmary. The requirements of urgency and demonstrable distress have been eliminated.

139. Act No. 2015-1702 of 21 December 2015 on social security financing for 2016 guarantees that consultations and examinations prior to the use of contraceptive methods for minors over 15 years of age shall be cost free and confidential and thereby removes possible financial constraints limiting access to contraception.

140. Act No. 2014-1554 of 22 December 2014 on social security financing for 2015 establishes free information, screening, and diagnostic centres (CeGidd) formed from the fusion of a number of already existing units and broadens their sphere of competence to include preventive vaccination against sexually transmitted diseases and prescribing contraception.

141. The national action programme launched in 2015 includes several measures designed to facilitate access to VTOPs and freedom to choose among existing methods of interrupting a pregnancy: elimination of the time for reflection period

[39] Act No. 2016-41 of 26 January 2016 on modernization of our health system.

between the initial consultation requesting information and the consultation to grant consent; drawing up regional access to abortion plans; and allowing VTOPs using instruments to be performed at health centres and those induced by drugs to be performed by midwives.

142. With a view to reducing teenage and unwanted pregnancies, a number of courses of action have been established in the overseas territories, such as guaranteeing access at pharmacies to the morning after pill, sex education classes at school, and so on. The possibility of extending the toll-free "Sexuality, Contraception, VYOPs" telephone number to the overseas departments is currently being studied.

15.3 Indicate any steps taken or envisaged to ensure that sex education classes are held in all schools and also provided to pupils from the primary level in an age-appropriate manner (§ 4.2.3.2 and 4.2.3.3)

143. Sex education is mandatory in all schools and colleges. The above-mentioned 2013-2018 interministerial convention[40] reiterates the requirement that sex education classes actually be held.

144. In primary schools, individual teachers are responsible for conducting sex education classes which must be labelled as such in curricula and class schedules. In secondary schools, sex education is coordinated with programmes and conducted by a multidisciplinary team.

145. Sex education draws on a network of teacher trainers at 20 academies, on 40,000 teachers in classroom, and teaching materials distributed to education offices and schools and downloaded from the Educsol resource site for education professionals. A manual entitled "Sexist behaviour and sexual violence: Prevent, Recognize, Act" was published in 2014.

15.4 Provide information on measures taken to reduce the maternal mortality rate, including by implementing the recommendations of the survey by the national expert committee (§ 4.2.4)

146. Since maternal and child mortality rates are still higher in overseas territories than in mainland France, improving certification of the cause of death is being taken into account in connection with the national health strategy for overseas departments currently being drawn up and in each territory's road map.

147. Health professionals have been notified of the need to identify pregnant women as a priority target group for flu shots.

148. The High Authority of Health has issued recommendations on identifying risk factors during pregnancy (high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, and so on) and on directing women whose condition warrants it to the maternity hospitals that can treat them appropriately. In 2014, the National College of Gynaecologists and Obstetricians updated recommendations to health professionals to be on alert for preventing and treating post-partum haemorrhage. Prenatal health networks were assigned new tasks in 2015 and are now responsible for proposing regional training courses on the subject and organizing morbidity and mortality surveys.

[40] The above-mentioned interministerial convention for equality of girls and boys and women and men in the education system of 7 February 2013.

15.5 Indicate what measures are planned to further combat new HIV infections in women, especially in the most exposed groups (§ 4.2.1.3), such as women with a low level of education, migrants and sex workers

149. Since 2014, the Ministry has been in partnership with nationwide associations engaged in informational, prevention and screening activities as well as support and assistance for persons living with HIV/AIDS in priority groups (men having sex with men, migrants) and the general public (especially women). With that support, every year some 30 national associations participate in the implementation of these actions to fight HIV/AIDS.

150. A policy of better targeted screening, accompanied by prevention activities, is now being implemented, be it in the form of community screening using Rapid Diagnostic Testing or repeated testing among the most at-risk groups, including migrant women and prostitutes.

Disadvantaged groups of women (Question No. 16)

16.1 In its report, the State party acknowledges that immigrant women are exposed to situations of inequality and violence more frequently than other women (§ 2.2.1.1). In the light of the current social and political context, which is characterized by an increasing number of acts of a racist, xenophobic and Islamophobic nature, provide information on measures taken or envisaged to combat all forms of discrimination against women belonging to racial, ethnic, national and religious minorities, including women living in sensitive urban areas, in particular single mothers, to ensure their equal access to employment, social security and social services, housing, health and education, and to the public and political arenas

151. The Act of 4 August 2014 strengthens the rights of foreign women victims of domestic violence in that they are now exempt from taxes and stamp duties when their residence permits are issued or renewed, regardless of the reason for the breakdown of the conjugal relationship.

152. Act No. 2014-173 of 21 February 2014 on urban planning and cohesion introduced a new generation of city contracts, one of whose across the board features is equality between women and men.

153. Under the three-year (2013-2015) agreement on targets for working class neighbourhoods, the 2016 guidelines aim to improve women's civic participation and their role in the public arena by developing local strategies for accessing the job market and generating activities.

154. The unemployment rate among female migrants aged between 15 and 64 is 25 per cent (2011), whereas the rate for the French female population is under 10 per cent. Those differences are accentuated in priority urban districts where women migrants are a majority. Actions are therefore being undertaken to assist women residing in those districts and women aged 16 to 25, monitored by local task forces.

16.2 Also indicate measures taken to ensure that racist, xenophobic, Islamophobic and sexist acts are thoroughly investigated

155. Prosecutors are required to react firmly and swiftly to such criminal acts by characterizing them at the highest level, taking specific aggravating circumstances

into account, and using fast track prosecution mechanisms. They also have to ensure that victims are looked after and their complaints facilitated by the dissemination of complaint and reporting forms, immediate registration of the complaint, and placing limits on police notification requirements (*la limitation du recours à la main-courante*).

156. A judge specializing in racism and discrimination has been assigned to each prosecutor's department and an anti-discrimination unit set up in each high court to facilitate access to justice for victims and improve the quality of the response by the criminal justice system.

157. The purpose of the new website http://stop-discrimination.gouv.fr (2015) is to provide information to anyone who is a victim of discrimination or a witness of it. A new national awareness campaign called "All of us United against Hate" was launched on 28 March 2016.

16.3 Further indicate whether any studies on violence against women and girls of immigrant origin have been conducted and used as a basis for the adoption of well targeted policies and programmes

158. The National Institute for Demographic Research (INED has published a study on "Services provided by the Voice of Women Association to persons involved in forced marriage" (2014).[41]

159. The INED study on "Violence and gender relations: contexts and consequences of violence against women and men" (known as the Violence and gender relations (VIRAGE) survey) constructs a typology of forms of violence that makes it possible to differentiate victims' situations based on the nature, context and gravity of the acts they were subjected to. The first findings from this survey conducted in mainland France are expected by end-2016.

Disadvantaged groups of women (Question No. 17)

17. Provide information on current and planned initiatives to address the challenges that indigenous women and girls face in the overseas territories, including the limited access to birth registration, culturally and linguistically relevant education, health-care services and employment opportunities; the limited access to financial support to develop and implement income-generating projects and local training programmes; discriminatory customary laws, especially in the area of inheritance and succession (e.g. Kanak customary laws); the low representation in customary institutions (e.g. the Kanak Customary Senate); the difficulty that they experience in fully exercising their right to self-determination and determining their own priorities for development; the lack of recognition of their right to own, have access to and use their traditional lands, resources and territories; the deteriorating health and living conditions, sometimes owing to the expansion of extractive industries into their territories; and the high rates of domestic and sexual violence against them

160. With respect to violence against women, the main associations seeking to prevent it and to provide assistance and shelter to women victims of it receive financial support for their activities, particularly from the State.

[41] http://femmes.gouv.fr/dossiers/lutte-contre-les-violences/publications-2/.

161. The "grave danger" telephone protection mechanism is being tested in Guadeloupe and Réunion Island, before being deployed in all overseas departments. Also in those two departments, the National Institute for Demographic Research (INED) is implementing a preparatory phase of the VIRAGE survey (see above).

162. A national charter is in the process of being signed on setting up a network of day care centres (*crèches*) in which at least 30 per cent of the children would be children of parents receiving extra assistance to return to the workforce.

163. In New Caledonia, with a view to combating discriminatory customary law provisions, the Ministry for the Status of Women prepared an educational guide to women's rights. Meetings with the Customary Senate and Customary Authorities provided an opportunity to discuss developments with respect to the status of Kanak women. At Government level, working groups have been established to examine issues relating to marital property settlements, parental authority and child custody.

164. In French Polynesia, a "platform for promoting women's rights and an egalitarian social model" has been launched.

165. Act No. 2016-41 of 26 January 2016 on modernizing our health system provides for the drafting of a specific health strategy for overseas territories in order to overcome shortcomings with respect to prevention and ambulatory care.

Women and girl refugees and asylum-seekers (Question No. 18)

18. **Provide information on measures to guarantee compliance with the international obligations of the State party towards women and girl refugees and asylum-seekers, including the protection of their fundamental rights and the provision of basic services, and training and guidelines for law enforcement officials and border guards on the gender sensitive treatment of women and girl refugees and asylum-seekers, at all stages of the asylum procedure**

166. The Act of 29 July 2015 on amendments to asylum provisions pays particular heed to the situation of women and girl asylum-seekers.

167. Regarding the terms on which asylum is granted and procedures for examining applications for asylum, the Act provides a definition of acts and grounds for persecution entitling a person to refugee status that draws on the so-called "qualification" Directive of 13 December 2011, which specifies persecution grounds based on a person's belonging to a social group and it underscores the need to take gender-related factors into account. The Act provides for the possibility of the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) adjusting the procedures for examining applications for asylum, especially those made by vulnerable individuals.[42]

168. The threat of excision constitutes grounds for granting protection, either under the Geneva Convention or by virtue of subsidiary protection provisions. The Act provides for the possibility of the OFPRA requesting a medical examination aimed at ascertaining lack of mutilation and notifying the Public Prosecutor should the applicant refuse to submit to that examination or if mutilation is ascertained. The modalities of that examination shall be circumscribed and established by decree.

[42] See the reply to question No. 6 above.

169. Regarding the terms of admission, the Act provides for an assessment of the vulnerability of the asylum-seeker carried out by the Immigration and Integration Office (OFII) in order to determine any special reception needs. Those provisions may be applied to vulnerable women pursuant to the European "Reception" Directive of 26 June 2013: women victims of trafficking or other serious forms of violence.

170. The Act provides that, in implementing the rights granted to beneficiaries of a protection measure, account shall be taken of the situation of vulnerable persons with special needs.

171. Undocumented foreign nationals may request State medical assistance (AME), a mechanism that enables them to access health care. It is assigned when their residence and resources are stable. Once it has been assigned, AME is granted for one year. Renewals have to be applied for each year.

Marriage and family relations (Question No. 19)

19. Single parent families, often headed by women, are particularly exposed to the risk of poverty. Provide information on results of the safeguard mechanism against failure to pay maintenance, introduced by the Gender Equality Act on a pilot basis (§ 4.3.2). Indicate whether the mechanism will be extended for general implementation throughout the State party, including the overseas territories

172. An 18-month pilot scheme was launched in October 2014 in 20 departments, aimed at strengthening the safeguard mechanism against failure to pay maintenance (GIPA) by disbursing a family support allowance to supplement low maintenance payments with up to €100 per child; improving the terms governing the disbursement of family support allowances (ASF); and strengthening the collection of maintenance by the family allowance debtor organizations.

173. The outcome is positive in the sense that by February 2014, nearly 5,000 families were benefiting from minimum maintenance safeguards. The direct payment arrangement simplified the work of the organizations running the mechanism and should improve the maintenance collection rate.

174. Pursuant to the Act of 21 December 2015 on social security financing for 2016, the GIPA was implemented nationwide as of 1 April 2016.

175. In Réunion Island, where the GIPA was tested, efforts are focused on involving all the actors in the framework of steering committees run by the Family Allowances Fund: the high court, legal aid associations, and so on.

176. In Mayotte, the situation is more complicated, inasmuch as many mothers are undocumented and thus lack a bank account for depositing the maintenance.

Marriage and family relations (Question No. 20)

20.1 Indicate whether the six lines of action against forced marriage (§ 2.2.2.3) have been implemented to protect migrant women and women of immigrant origin in particular and indicate whether they have been implemented in the overseas territories

177. A new criminal offence, coercion to marry, was introduced by the Act of 5 August 2013. Misleading a person into travelling abroad and obliging her or him to enter into marriage is henceforth punishable with three years' imprisonment and a €45,000 fine.

178. The above-mentioned Act of 4 August requires free and informed consent of the spouses, regardless of the personal law applicable if one spouse is a foreign national. Thus, the free and informed consent provided for under French law prevails over foreign laws that have a more restricted concept of marital consent.

179. On 4 July 2014, France ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the prevention and fight against violence against women and domestic violence

180. Efforts to combat forced marriage are written into the fourth interministerial plan for preventing and combating violence against women (2014-2016).[43]

181. Regarding overseas territories, this violence is still poorly characterized in Réunion Island and in Mayotte. Cases that are detected are handled by the Association for the condition of women and assistance to victims (AFCAV).

20.2 Indicate whether the offence introduced in article 222-14-4 of the Penal Code (misleading a person to travel abroad and obliging her or him to marry) has yet been committed and prosecuted. Also indicate the legal conditions under which cases of forced marriage committed outside the territory of the State party can be prosecuted in the State party. Article 222-14-4 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes misleading a person into travelling abroad and obliging her or him to enter into marriage, has been applicable since the entry into force of the Act of 7 August 2013. The circumstances under which it is applicable are specified in a circular of 19 December 2013. Apart from that offence, there are other mechanisms allowing forced marriages contracted abroad to be prosecuted in France

182. Act No. 2010-769 of 9 July 2010 on violence specifically directed against women, on conjugal violence, and the impact of such violence on children, established as an aggravating factor assault on a person committed in order to force the victim to marry or enter into a civil union or because of that person's refusal to contract that marriage or union.

183. The Public Prosecutors' Office may prosecute those offences without a prior complaint by the victim or her or his successors and without an official denunciation by the authorities in the country in which the deed was committed.

184. Whoever commits these offences may, as an additional penalty, be banned from leaving the territory of the French Republic for five years (article 222-47 of the Criminal Code).

[43] See the reply to question No. 5, above.

185. The Act of 4 August 2014[44] requires French consular authorities to take appropriate steps to ensure, with their consent, the return to French territory of French nationals or persons who habitually and lawfully reside in French territory, in cases of deliberate violence or sexual assault committed in the context of a forced marriage or refusal to submit to a forced marriage.

20.3 Also update information, including statistics, on the incidence of forced marriage in the State party

186. With respect to offences relating to forced marriage aggravated by the circumstance of refusal to contract or intention to force someone to contract marriage, there was one conviction in 2013; and another in 2014 for the offence of "violence without disablement against a person due to that person's refusal to contract marriage or a civil union or in order to force that person to do so". Two people were convicted in 2010, two in 2013 and two in 2014 for the offence of "violence followed by disablement not exceeding 8 days against a person due to that person's refusal to contract marriage or a civil union or in order to force that person to do so".

[44] The above-mentioned Act No. 2014-873 of 4 August 2014 for real equality between women and men.